

3 December 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: Colonel White

1. About a month ago we learned that the Personnel Office had adopted a procedure whereby no action would be taken to assign an employee with a physical disability to an overseas area unless there was in existence a memorandum from the Operating Office stating that the individual was acceptable to the senior representative of the overseas area concerned. This appeared to pose some question of consistency with existing delegations of authority for assigning overseas personnel. Accordingly, the Personnel Office was asked to study the problem further and to give consideration also to any regulatory changes which might seem to be warranted.
2. The Personnel Office says that the procedure in question was requested by COA/DDP. The Personnel Office seems to agree that the procedure could be better worded in order to avoid any question of conflict with existing delegations of authority. In a new letter to the COA/DDP (copy of which Personnel has furnished us) it is stated that Personnel will process employees (who have medical waivers) for overseas assignment only if the operating office states in writing that, despite its cognizance of the disability, the individual's service in an overseas capacity is still desired. This will accomplish the same control purposes sought by the earlier memorandum which we questioned, and at the same time avoid the semblance of weakening the authority of headquarters offices.
3. The Personnel Office feels that reference to this control mechanism should appear in the Personnel Procedures Handbook rather than in a specific regulation. They recommend further that incorporation in the Handbook be held in abeyance so as not to further delay publication of the Handbook itself. As you know, the Handbook is just about ready to go to press. I believe we should accept their recommendation that this change should be held off until it is necessary to publish other changes to the Handbook. The need for such other changes will undoubtedly occur in a relatively short time, in view of the shifting nature of Personnel procedures.

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